

Houghton-le-Spring Urban District
Council.

**REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH**

FOR THE YEAR 1939.

L. A. M. JOHNSTON,
B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

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Houghton-le-Spring,
January, 1941.

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I herewith submit my third Annual Report on the Vital Statistics and Sanitary Conditions of the Urban District of Houghton-le-Spring for the year ended 31st December, 1939.

The delay in the issue of this Report is partly due to the delay of six months in receiving certain statistics from the Registrar-General and general pressure of work due to the emergency conditions.

Whilst Sanitary Improvements on Housing and Building continued for the first 8 months of 1939, the beginning of war brought much of this work to a standstill.

I have much pleasure in acknowledging the loyal co-operation of the Council and colleagues on the staff in the work of this department.

I am,

Mr. Chairman and Members,

Your obedient servant,

LILIAN A. M. JOHNSTON.

To the CHAIRMAN and MEMBERS,

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

The Staff consists of :—

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH. Whole time appointment (see below). Degrees of B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (St. Andrews). The Medical Officer is the Medical Superintendent of the Council's Isolation Hospitals.

SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR. Whole time. Holds Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, also acts as Factory and Workshops Inspector and Inspector under the Shops Act.

SANITARY INSPECTOR — No. 2 District. Whole time. Holds Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Certificate for Inspection of Meat and Other Foods.

SANITARY INSPECTOR — No. 3 District. Whole time. Holds Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Certificate for Inspection of Meat and Other Foods.

SURVEYOR AND ENGINEER. Whole time. Fellow of Surveyors' Institute and holds Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

HEALTH VISITORS. Are appointed by and work under the direction of the County Council. They are fully qualified holding Nurses Certificates, etc.

FOOD AND DRUG INSPECTORS. Are also appointed and work under the direction of the County Council.

VETERINARY INSPECTORS. Are fully qualified men appointed by and working under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture.

MATRON OF THE NORTHERN ISOLATION HOSPITAL. Whole time. Fully trained in General and Fever Nursing.

Contribution is made by the Government to the salaries of the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspectors.

The Tuberculosis, School Medical, Maternity or Child Welfare and Venereal Diseases Schemes are all administered directly by the County Council. The County Council also appoint the Public Assistance District Medical Officers and the Public Vaccinators.

The Medical Officer of Health for the Urban District of Houghton-le-Spring is also the Public Assistance District Medical Officer for the No. 52 district of the No. 10 (Houghton and Chester-le-Street) Guardian's Committee area (i.e. for the old parishes of Warden Law and Houghton-le-Spring), and acts as Medical Officer of the local Public Assistance Hospital, Institution and Cottage Homes.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area in acres—5013 acres.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population—mid 1938—29,450.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1939) according to Rate Books—8,064.

Rateable Value—£104,030.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£380.

Social Conditions and Chief Industries.

The chief industry in the district is that of coal mining. Subsidiary industries are agriculture and general trading whilst a proportion of the male population has found a fairly continuous employment at house erection. Temporary employment has been afforded by schemes carried out with the assistance of the Special Commissioner for Distressed Areas such as the sewerage works at South Biddick, and conversion of ash-closets to water carriage system.

Vital Statistics.

Births and Birth Rate.

The nett number of live births (as corrected by the Registrar-General for outward and inward transfers) during 1939 was 483 as compared with 475 for 1938.

Sex and legitimacy classification are shown thus:

		Total	Male	Female	
Live Births	{ Legitimate	466	239	227	} Birth Rate per 1000 of the estimated population 16.38
	{ Illegitimate	17	11	6	

The Registrar-General states the Birth Rate per 1,000 population in England and Wales (live births) was 15.0 for 1939.

The following table shows (1) the total number of births (2) the number of males born (3) the number of females born (4) the birth rate per 1,000 population and (5) the total increase of population (i.e. the excess of births over deaths) for 1939 as compared with 1938.

Year	Total births	Males	Females	Rate per 1,000	Total increase
1938	475	231	244	16.13	120
1939	483	250	233	16.38	161

Still Births—During 1939 there were 20 still births in the district.

		Total	Male	Female	giving a Rate of 39.76 per 1000 total (live and still births) births
Still Births	Legitimate	20	6	14	
	Illegitimate ...	0	0	0	

There is a still birth rate per 1,000 population of 0.68 in the district as compared with 0.59 for England and Wales.

Deaths and Death Rate.

The Registrar-General reports that after correction for outward and inward transfers, 322 residents in the Houghton le-Spring Urban District died, being 170 males and 152 females.

The death rate, therefore, corrected for outward and inward transfers and including deaths from all causes and at all ages was 11.39.

Locally compiled and correct figures are as follows :—

During 1939 there were 284 deaths registered as having occurred within the district, being 148 males and 136 females. Of these 21 males and 16 females did not normally reside in the area, therefore 127 males and 120 females having their permanent residence within the district died therein. 42 males and 33 females whose permanent residence was within the area died outside it. The total number of deaths therefore, corrected for outward and inward transfers, is 322, being 169 males and 153 females.

The death rate corrected for outward and inward transfers and including deaths from all causes and at all ages was 11.39, the population at mid year 1939 being estimated to be 29,150. That for 1938 was 12.05.

The Registrar-General has calculated the death rate for England and Wales with a view to age — sex distribution and supplies a factor for obtaining a “ crude ” death rate for the district that it may be more fairly compared with that for Eng-

land and Wales. Such crude death rate in the Houghton-le-Spring Urban District was 13.44 (using the locally corrected 11.39 death rate and a comparability factor of 1.18) as against 12.1 for England and Wales, and 14.22 for Houghton in 1938.

Total Deaths under Five Years (corrected locally).

During 1939, 28 children died under the age of five years, as against 37 in 1938. Therefore 8.7 per cent. of the total deaths was of deaths of children under 5 years of age, as against 10.4 per cent. in 1938.

Deaths in Institutions.

Of the 76 residents who died outside the district, 1 was killed in a coal mine and 1 outside. The remaining 74 died in Institutions, as follows :—

Sunderland Royal Infirmary	...	...	...	...	44
Fleming Memorial Hospital, Newcastle	...	...	...	...	1
Wolsingham Sanatorium	...	...	...	...	2
Sunderland Children's Hospital	...	...	...	...	8
Durham County Mental Hospital, Sedgfield	...	...	...	...	3
Sunderland Municipal Hospital	...	...	...	...	1
Princess Mary Maternity Hospital, Newcastle	...	...	...	...	3
Relton House, Chester-le-Street	...	...	...	...	6
Pinewood Nursing Home, Poole	...	...	...	...	1
Wingrove General Hospital, Newcastle	...	...	...	...	1
37, Crossgate, Durham	...	...	...	...	1
Sherburn House Hospital, Sherburn	...	...	...	...	2
High Barnes, Sunderland	...	...	...	...	1

23 residents in the district died in Heath House, therefore of the total 322 deaths of residents, 97 or 30.1% occurred in institutions.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes. (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's short list).

There was one death among women from puerperal sepsis but none from other puerperal causes, viz. :

	Deaths	Rate per 1000 live births	Rate per 1000 total (live & still) births
No. 29—Puerperal Sepsis	1	2.07	1.99
No. 30—			
Other Puerperal Causes	—	—	—
	—	—	—
Total	1	2.07	1.99

The figures for England and Wales were :—

Death Rate per 1000 live births from Puerperal Sepsis	0.77
Death Rate per 1000 live births from Other Puerperal Causes	2.16
	<hr/>
Total ...	2.93
Death Rate per 1000 total (live and still)	
births from Puerperal Sepsis ...	0.74
Death Rate per 1000 total (live and still)	
births from Other Puerperal Causes ...	2.08
	<hr/>
Total ...	2.82

Death Rate of Infants under One Year.

21 children died during 1939 before attaining the age of 1 year, being 6 legitimate males and 14 legitimate females.

During 1938, 28 children died during this age period, none being illegitimate.

The following table shows the death rate of infants under one year of age according to the total number of live births and legitimacy for the years 1938 and 1939.

	1938	1939
All infants per 1000 live births	58.9	43.5
Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births	69.4	45.1

It will be noted from Table II. that the largest number of infantile deaths occurred in Penshaw Ward, for 6 died in Houghton, 9 in Penshaw, 3 in Newbottle, 2 in Herrington and 1 in Fence Houses.

For the purpose of these and following statistics the population of the various wards has been taken as follows :—

Houghton	...	9001
Penshaw	...	6984
Newbottle	...	5018
Fence Houses	...	4698
Herrington	...	3789
		<hr/>
Total	...	29490

The ratio of infantile deaths per 1000 population is :—

Houghton Ward	...	0.67
Penshaw Ward	...	1.30
Newbottle Ward	...	0.59
Fence Houses Ward	...	0.21
Herrington Ward	...	0.53

Of the 21 infants who died under one year of age, the cause of death was attributable to congenital malformation, prematurity and debility in 6 cases, giving a percentage of 33.3%

The following table shows in detail the amount and causes of infantile deaths under one year of age during 1939, and also the number of deaths at the various ages, viz— 8 under one week, 1 between 3 and 4 weeks, 4 between 4 weeks and 3 months, 4 between 3 months and 6 months, 1 between 6 months and 9 months, and 3 between 9 months and 12 months, a total of 21.

Since the total deaths from all causes and at all ages in the district was 322, 6.5 per cent. of the total deaths were of children under one year of age. Of these under one year of age 38.1 per cent. were under one week and 42.9 per cent. under four weeks of age.

Infant Mortality during the year ended 31st December, 1939.

Nett deaths from stated causes at various ages under 1 year of age.

Causes of Death			Under 1 Week	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	Total under 4 Weeks	4 Weeks and under 3 Months	3 Months and under 6 Months	6 Months and under 9 Months	9 Months and under 12 Months	Total Deaths under 1 Year
All Causes	Certified ...	...	7	...	...	1	8	4	4	1	3	20
	Uncertified	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Small-pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Chicken pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Whooping-cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Diphtheria and Croup	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Tubercular Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Abdominal Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Meningitis (not Tuberculous)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Convulsions	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1

Laryngitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	2
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	3	...	...	6

Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Enteritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1

Gastritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Syphilis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1

Rickets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Suffocation, overlying	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Injury at Birth...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Atelectasis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Congenital Malformations	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	2

Premature Birth	...	...	5	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	5

Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1

Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Other causes	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	3

			8	...	...	1	9	4	4	1	3	21

Nett Live Births—Legitimate.

Illegitimate

Males. Females.

Males. Females.

Corrected as per Registrar General ... } 239 227 11 6 = 483

Nett Deaths— 12 9 0 0 = 21
Local Corrected Figures.

During 1939 there were 278 deaths certified by registered medical practitioners (four of the deceased so certified having post mortems performed on them). 2 deaths were certified by the Coroner after post mortem and inquest; 28 by the Coroner after inquest (without post mortem); and 14 were uncertified.

The ratio of deaths (at all ages and corrected) in the various wards is shown in the following two tables, the first showing the number of deaths which occurred in each ward (and in the district) during each of the four quarters, i.e. Seasonal incidence, and the second showing the age distribution of the deaths in the various wards.

Table I. Seasonal Incidence.

Ward	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total
Houghton	37	33	30	24	124
Penshaw	22	22	15	16	75
Newbottle	15	8	8	16	47
Fence Houses	9	12	12	14	47
Herrington	4	12	4	9	29
Totals	87	87	69	79	322

Table II. Age Incidence.

Ward.	Under 1 year.	1-2 years.	2-5 years.	5-15 years.	15-25 years.	25-45 years.	45-65 years.	65-75 years.	75 years & over.	Total.
Houghton	6	1	1	3	5	10	35	31	32	124
Penshaw	9	1	1	1	5	8	17	17	17	75
Newbottle	3	1	1	1	1	4	16	14	7	47
Fence Houses	1	2	1	1	2	4	8	19	9	47
Herrington	2	1	1	1	1	1	6	10	9	29
Total	21	4	3	7	13	27	82	91	74	322

During the year under consideration there was 1 death from the chief zymotic diseases, giving a death rate per 1000 population, from this cause, of 0.04.

There was 1 death from "infantile" diarrhoea (under 2 years of age).

In 1938 there were 6 deaths from the chief zymotic diseases being 2 from "infantile" diarrhoea, 2 from diphtheria and 2 from measles — equivalent to a death rate of 0.20 per 1000 population.

Comparative Table :

No. of Deaths in Houghton-le-Spring
Population 29,150.

Death Rates in Houghton-le-Spring per 1000 population
as compared with those for
England and Wales.

Ho.—Houghton-le-Spring
E-W—England and Wales

Year	All Causes	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever	Smallpox	Measles	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Diphtheria	Influenza	Diarrhoea under 2 years	All Causes		Typhoid & Paratyphoid Fever		Smallpox		Measles		Scarlet Fever		Whooping Cough		Diphtheria		Influenza	
										Ho.	E-W	Ho.	E-W	Ho.	E-W	Ho.	E-W	Ho.	E-W	Ho.	E-W	Ho.	E-W	Ho.	E-W
1937	361	0	0	1	1	1	3	14	5	13.44	12.4	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.04	0.10	0.07	0.47	0.45
1938	355	0	0	2	0	0	2	8	2	14.22	11.6	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.06	0.07	0.27	0.11
1939	322	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	1	13.44	12.1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.05	0.44	0.21

Causes of Death in Houghton-le-Spring Urban District during 1939.

Causes of Death.				Male		Female.
All Causes				170	....	152
1.	Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers			0	....	0
2.	Measles	....	....	0	....	0
3.	Scarlet Fever	....	....	0	....	0
4.	Whooping Cough	....	....	0	....	1
5.	Diphtheria	....	....	0	....	0
6.	Influenza	....	....	5	....	6
7.	Encephalitis lethargica	....	....	0	....	0
8.	Cerebro-spinal fever	....	....	0	....	0
9.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system			9	....	2
10.	Other tuberculous diseases			3	....	4
11.	Syphilis	....	....	1	....	0
12.	General paralysis of the insane, tabes dorsalis			1	....	0
13.	Cancer, malignant disease			18	....	11
14.	Diabetes	....	....	1	....	2
15.	Cerebral hæmorrhage, etc.			17	....	11
16.	Heart disease	....	....	43	....	48
17.	Aneurysm	....	....	1	....	0
18.	Other circulatory diseases			3	....	8
19.	Bronchitis	....	....	9	....	5
20.	Pneumonia (all forms)			11	....	8
21.	Other respiratory diseases			0	....	1
22.	Peptic Ulcer	....	....	1	....	0
23.	Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 years)			1	....	0
24.	Appendicitis	....	....	2	....	1
25.	Cirrhosis of liver	....	....	1	....	0
26.	Other diseases of liver, etc,			2	....	2
27.	Other digestive diseases			6	....	5
28.	Nephritis acute and chronic			1	....	3
29.	Puerperal sepsis	....	....	0	....	1
30.	Other puerperal causes			0	....	0
31.	Congenital debility, premature birth, malformations, etc.			3	....	5
32.	Senility	....	....	4	....	8
33.	Suicide	....	....	0	....	0
34.	Other violence			17	....	5
35.	Other defined diseases			10	....	15
	Diarrhœa (2 years and over)			0		0
	Polioencephalitis			0		0
36.	Causes ill-defined or unknown			0	....	0

The following table shows the Birth-rates, Death-rates, Analysis of Mortality, Maternal Death-rates, and Case-rates for certain Infectious Diseases for the year 1939, for England and Wales, 126 County Boroughs and Great Towns including London, 148 Smaller Towns including Houghton-le-Spring. (Resident Population 25,000 to 50,000), compared with those for Houghton-le-Spring.

Birth-rates, Death-rates, Analysis of Mortality, Maternal Death-rates, and Case-rates for certain Infectious Diseases in the year 1939.

(England and Wales, London, 126 Great Towns and 148 Smaller Towns).

(Provisional Figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns).

	England and Wales.	126 County Boro's. and Great Towns including London.	148 Smaller Towns (Resident populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census).	London Administra- tive County.	Houghton-le-Spring Urban District.
	Rates per 1,000 Population.				
BIRTHS—					
Live 	15.0	14.8	15.6	12.3	15.38
Still 	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.44	0.68
DEATHS—					
All Causes 	12.1	12.0	11.2	11.9	11.39
Typhoid and Paratyphoid fevers } ...	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Smallpox 	0.00	0.00	—	—	—
Measles 	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Scarlet Fever ...	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Whooping Cough ...	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03
Diphtheria 	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.00
Influenza 	0.21	0.19	0.20	0.18	0.38
NOTIFICATIONS—					
Smallpox 	0.00	—	0.00	—	0.00
Scarlet fever ...	1.89	1.96	1.78	1.53	0.65
Diphtheria 	1.14	1.21	1.16	0.98	0.17
Enteric fever ...	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.00
Erysipelas 	0.34	0.40	0.31	0.37	0.44
Pneumonia 	1.02	1.21	0.89	0.99	2.74
	Rates per 1,000 Live Births.				
Deaths under 1 year of age ...	50	53	40	48	43.5
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age } ...	4.6	6.3	3.0	8.2	2.1
MATERNAL MORTALITY—					
Puerperal Sepsis ...	0.77	}	Not available.		2.07
Others 	2.16				0.00
Total 	2.93				2.07
	Rates per 1,000 Total Births(i e. Live & Still)				
MATERNAL MORTALITY—					
Puerperal Sepsis ...	0.74	}	Not available.		1.99
Others 	2.08				0.00
Total 	2.82				1.99
NOTIFICATIONS—					
Puerperal fever }	14.35	17.26	12.99	{ 3.31 14.22	10.35
Puerperal pyrexia }					

Causes of Death.

(a) Tuberculosis.

There were 11 deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis and 7 from non-pulmonary tuberculosis during 1939, being equivalent to a death rate, per 1000 population, of 0.38 from pulmonary and 0.24 from non-pulmonary forms.

Comparative Table :

Year	No. of Deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Death Rate per 1000 population from Pulmonary Tuberculosis England and Wales	Death Rate per 1000 population from Pulmonary Tuberculosis Houghton-le-Spring	No. of Deaths from Non Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Death Rate per 1000 population from Non Pulmonary Tuberculosis England and Wales	Death Rate per 1000 population from Non Pulmonary Tuberculosis Houghton-le-Spring
1937	12	.58	.41	2	.11	.06
1938	15	.53	.51	5	.16	.10
1939	11	Not available	.38	7	Not available	.24

(b) Heart Disease.

Heart disease was, as in former years, the chief cause of death throughout the area. 91 persons, being 43 males and 48 females, were certified to have died from heart disease. This is equivalent to 28.26 per cent. of the total deaths and to a mortality rate of 3.19 per 1000 population.

Comparative Table :

Year	Total Deaths All Causes	Deaths due to Heart Disease			Death Rate per 1000 population		Percentage Total Deaths due to Heart Disease
			M	F	All Causes	Heart Disease	
1937	361	97	50	47	12.24	3.29	26.87
1938	355	110	61	49	12.05	3.73	39.86
1939	322	91	43	48	13.44	3.19	28.26

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

Public Health Officers of the Authority.

See commencement of Report.

Development or changes in the following Services.

Laboratory Facilities.

As before.

Ambulance Facilities.

As before.

There appears to be sufficient facilities for the transport of patients suffering from ordinary sickness or accident and infectious diseases. The Council's ambulance service is satisfactorily augmented by the ambulances which are provided by the Colliery Company.

Nursing in the Home.

Maternity nursing is now done almost entirely by midwives appointed by the County Council.

Sickness and Accidents. These cases may be attended by District Nurses. There are three branches of the Nursing Association operating viz. : Philadelphia and District, Lumley and Fence Houses, and Houghton-le-Spring. The subscription is extremely small, a penny per week. The County Council subscribe to all local branches annually, and anyone who is normally in receipt of Public Assistance may, in case of illness, have the services of a nurse on the recommendation of a doctor.

Infectious Diseases. These are usually nursed by parents or relatives or removed to the Council's Isolation Hospital. In very exceptional circumstances the Council could make available the provision of trained nurses for home nursing of infectious diseases.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

There is no change in the services provided, all being maintained and administered by the County Council.

Hospitals — Public and Voluntary.

There is no change in the services provided.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supply.

Bacteriological examinations of water have been made monthly throughout the year and with the exception of the supply from Houghton Pit which showed considerable variation, the results indicated generally that an abundant supply of wholesome water was available. Necessary extensions to existing mains to meet building developments have been made.

Gloset Accommodation.

Considerable progress was made with the work of converting the existing ash-closets to the water carriage system.

Half the actual cost of this work is chargeable to the owners and the Commissioner for Special Areas has made a 75% grant towards the Council's share of the cost.

The number of each type of convenience at the end of 1939 was as follows :

Water Closets	...	...	7844
Ash Closets	...	...	58
Privy Middens	...	...	14

Sewage Disposal Works.

The Flint Mill Sewage Disposal Works continue to function satisfactorily, but repairs had to be executed to the tank walls owing to damage through mining operations.

The Sedgeleth Sewage Disposal Works were opened in May, 1938 and these are working satisfactorily.

The construction of the North Biddick Sewage Disposal Works was continued during the year.

Rivers and Streams.

Numerous complaints have been received in regard to the deposit of rubbish, etc. in the burn at Herrington, and on account of the nuisances created thereby a scheme for the culverting of the Burn, at an estimated cost of £1400, has been prepared and submitted to the Commissioner for Special Areas for grant assistance.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

The conversion of the ashclosets to the water carriage system has resulted in the general use of galvanized iron ash-

bins for refuse. This necessitates collection of refuse twice weekly and facilitates the removal of same. There are nine motor vehicles employed on the work and these are equally housed at three depots situate at Houghton, Newbottle and Penshaw. The personnel engaged in this service consists of 23 men who come under the supervision of your sanitary inspector. The introduction of direct labour scavenging has resulted in the work of cleansing being more regularly and efficiently performed. The refuse is disposed of by depositing on tips which are under the control of the Local Authority.

The number of houses scavenged is 7,868, and the approximate cost 15/9 per house per annum.

Summary of work done in the Sanitary Inspector's Department during
the year 1939

I. Public Health Acts.			Number of informal written Notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal Notices by order of Authority.	Number of Nuisances abated after Notice,
Dwelling-houses	} Foul Conditions Structural Defects Overcrowding		2	...	2
and			126	34	68
Schools			22	...	8
Lodging-houses	...	...	...	...	...
Dairies and Milkshops	...	...	16	...	16
Cowsheds	...	...	8	...	8
Bakehouses	...	...	4	2	4
Slaughter-houses	...	...	6	...	6
Ashpits and Privies...	...	...	82	20	74
Deposits of Refuse and Manure			4	...	4
Waterclosets	...	...	82	...	82
Defective Yard Paving	...	...	8	...	6
House	} Defective Traps ... No disconnection from sewers Other Faults	...	46	2	46
Drainage		...	2	...	2
		...	78	4	78
Water Supply	...	...	26	...	26
Pigsties	...	...	2	...	2
Animals Improperly Kept	...	...	...	...	...
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	...	...
Smoke Nuisances	...	...	1	...	1
Other Nuisances	...	...	16	...	16
TOTALS ...			531	62	449

Shops Acts.

During the winter period the usual closing hours were curtailed. This resulted in considerable benefit to the shop assistants and without detriment to the shop keepers. Efforts are being made to restrict the hours for the sale of ice cream, etc. Several improvements have been made to shops during the year, including the provision of rest rooms in two cases, and all tending to improve the general working conditions of the shop assistants.

Camping Sites.

This area is in the centre of the coal mining industry and there are no sites used for camping. An annual "Fair" of four days duration is provided by travelling showmen, for whom sanitary arrangements are provided.

Tents, Vans and Sheds.

During the year further action was taken in respect of caravans and there are now none inhabited in the area.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

There are no public or privately owned swimming baths or pools in the district.

Schools.

The sanitary condition of the schools was found to be satisfactory.

It has never been necessary to request that a school should be closed on account of infectious disease. Speaking generally, infectious cases have occurred scattered throughout the district and entirely without evidence of mass infection.

Public Houses — Sanitary Accommodation.

Outstanding requirements referred to in my last report were satisfactorily completed during the year.

Cinemas.

Cinemas and places of public entertainment were inspected during the year and certificates issued as to their sanitary condition.

Smoke Abatement.

Complaints of a smoke nuisance emanating from a boiler at the Heath House institution was investigated and taken up with the authority concerned. This resulted in considerable improvement being effected.

Eradication of the Bed Bug.

The work is undertaken by the Sanitary Inspectors in co-operation with either tenant or owner. In the case of properties situate in Clearance Areas the premises are visited before rehousing takes place, and if infestation is present the premises and furniture are fumigated. Periodical inspections are made to ensure that the tenants carry out the Inspector's instructions as much depends on the efforts of the tenants themselves.

	Infested	Disinfested
Number of Council Houses ...	28	28
Number of Other Houses ...	23	23

Rat Infestation.

Several complaints were received of rat infested houses. There is a definite tendency to exaggeration in these cases. Complaints are investigated by your Inspectors, advice given and if necessary the circumstances are reported to the County Officer. During the year 12 cases were investigated.

Housing (Rural Workers' Act) 1936.

Several applications for grants under this Act were submitted and all received favourable consideration. During the year improvements were completed in respect of 2 houses Houghton Ward, 3 houses Newbottle Ward, 4 houses Herrington Ward and 7 houses Penshaw Ward.

Work is in progress on other houses coming within the scheme.

Housing Conditions.

Housing Statistics for the year 1939.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year :

(1) <i>a</i>) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	756
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	980
(2)(<i>a</i>) Number of Dwelling-houses (included under sub head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidation Regulations, 1925 and 1932	342
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	418
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	6
(4) Number of Dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	226

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without Service of formal Notices :—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ...	182
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3 Action under Statutory Powers during the year :—

A.—Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	6
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	
(<i>a</i>) By owners	6
(<i>b</i>) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	214
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
(<i>a</i>) By owners	34
(<i>b</i>) By Local Authority in default of owners	784

C.—Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	2
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	Nil

D.—Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	4
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	... ..	Nil

Council Houses.

Statement of Progress.

SITE	No. of houses erected prior to 1939	No. of houses erected during 1939	No. of houses in course of erection at 31st Dec., 1939	Total
Newtown	82	...	...	82
North Rectory	60	...	...	60
Villa No. 1 and 2	176	...	...	176
Chilton Moor	142	6	...	148
Colliery Row	64	...	...	64
Hetton Road	302	4	...	306
Hall Lane	65	...	...	65
Race Course ... ..	...	52	32	84
Grange Estate	80	8	...	88
Sedgeleth	20	...	8	28
Hillside... ..	72	...	...	72
Homelands	170	...	...	170
St. Aidan's	108	...	...	108
Park Estate	268	...	...	268
Station Road	56	...	...	56
Chandler Row	9	...	...	9
Chester Road Estate	174	24	8	206
New Penshaw	30	...	...	30
Penshaw Hill	72	...	...	72
	1950	94	48	2092

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk Supply.

Samples of milk have been regularly submitted to King's College for bacteriological examination. These include samples taken from the milk supplied to schools and imported milk usually sold on Sundays.

In cases where the reports were unsatisfactory the dairy methods were kept under close observation, and the dairymen were advised by the Sanitary Inspector. In all cases very considerable improvement were effected. The producers and retailers have always been ready to co-operate with the Health Department in their efforts to secure a clean wholesome milk supply, and I wish to express my appreciation of their help.

During the year the farm house at Stotts Pasture was voluntarily closed and converted to byres and farm buildings.

Changes in tenancies occurred at Ewe Hill Farm, Herrington Burn Farm and Penshaw North Farm, and the County Authority was notified of these changes.

The number of registered cowkeepers and dairymen in the district is 32. Of these 6 are producers of Tuberculin Tested (Certified) or "Accredited" Milk. Practically the whole of the milk supply is obtained in the immediate locality where the dairy herds are of a very high standard.

Slaughter-Houses.

There are 15 licensed slaughter-houses in the district and 32 shops for the sale of meat.

These premises are regularly inspected and the inspection of carcasses is very rigid.

The animals slaughtered are generally of a good prime quality, the bulk of them now arrive in motor trucks from the marts and are properly housed and hungered before slaughtering.

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933.

The provisions of this Act are strictly enforced in the area and 53 slaughtermen are now registered under the Act.

The Humane Killer is in general use.

The following are the approximate number of animals slaughtered during the year.

Cattle	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs
1451	525	138	3365	1439

making a total of 6918 of which 80% were inspected.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known) ...	1451	525	138	3365	1439
Number inspected ...	1060	500	138	2609	1314
All diseases except T.B.—					
Whole carcasses condemned...	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	130	62	—	30	—
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with disease other than T.B. ...	12.5	12.4	—	1.1	—
T.B. only—					
Whole carcasses condemned...	3	5	—	—	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	27	71	—	—	29
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with T.B. ...	3.5	15.2	—	—	2.3

Shellfish.

There are no beds in the district.

Bakehouses.

Inspections revealed that the general standard of cleanliness was satisfactory. During the year a bakehouse situate in the Houghton Ward underwent extensive alterations and very considerable improvement was effected thereby.

Factories Act, 1937.

The following are the principal places within your district.

1. Philadelphia Engine Works and Repairing Shops.
2. Philadelphia Joinery Works.
3. Durham Collieries Electrical Power Station.
4. Sunderland & District Omnibus Co.
5. Co-operative Stores and Workshops.
6. Gas Works.
7. Joinery Works.
8. Boring Tool Works.
9. Printing.
10. Builders Merchants
11. Candle Making
12. Bakeries
13. Sugar Confectioners

During the year these have been inspected and any nuisances or defects found were remedied without the necessity for formal action.

1—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

INCLUDING INSPECTIONS MADE BY SANITARY INSPECTORS.

Premises (1)	Number of		
	Inspections (2)	Written Notices (3)	Occupiers prosecuted (4)
Factories with mechanical power ...	26	...	...
Factories without mechanical power...	58	6	...
†Other Premises under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including out-workers' premises).	...	...	...
†Electrical Stations should be reckoned as factories. Total	84	6	...

2—Defects found.

Particulars (1)	Number of Defects			Number of defects in respect of which Prosecutions were instituted (5)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred to H.M. Inspector (4)	
Want of cleanliness (S1) ...	2	2	...	...
Overcrowding (S2) ...	...	...	...	...
Unreasonable Temperature (S3)	...	...	...	...
Inadequate ventilation (S4) ...	...	...	...	...
Ineff'ctive drainage of floors (S6)	...	...	...	...
Sanitary conveniences (S7):—				
Insufficient ...	1	1	...	...
Unsuitable or defective ...	2	2	...	...
Not separate for sexes ...	1	1	...	...
Other offences ...	...	...	...	...
(Not including offences relating to Home Work or offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories & Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order 1921, and re-enacted in the Third Schedule to the Factories Act, 1937.)				
Total ...	6	6	...	...

Prevalence of, and Control over Infectious and other Diseases.

During 1939 some 190 cases of infectious diseases, including all forms of Tuberculosis were notified (and including cases of measles and whooping cough which became notifiable in October, 1939), a decrease of 100 compared with the notifications during 1938.

Scarlet Fever.

26 cases were notified as against 80 in 1938 and of these 23 were isolated in hospital.

For reasons applicable in previous years—impracticability of providing a sick person with a room entirely to himself or herself, most cases require to be nursed in hospital and experience has shown that return cases are practically non-existent after six weeks' isolation although more often occurring when isolation is shortened.

Five cases of puerperal pyrexia were notified but without any relationship to cases of Scarlet Fever or sore throat without rash.

The case incidence was 0.89 per 1000 population, that for England and Wales being 1.89 per 1000 population.

The case incidence for the various Wards was : Houghton 0.67, Penshaw 1.14, Newbottle 0.00, Fence Houses 1.49, and Herrington 1.32.

Diphtheria.

There were 19 cases of diphtheria in the district during 1939 as compared with 63 cases in 1938. This is a marked improvement on the number of cases notified annually for some years. Of these 18 cases were removed to hospital in addition to a number of cases which were suspected of having diphtheria and were later proved to be non-diphthretic.

It is with pleasure we would point out that no deaths occurred in the district from this cause. This is partly due to prompt administration of anti-toxin by practitioners when suspecting diphtheria and they are reminded that this anti-toxin is available by day or night at the Northern Isolation Hospital, or during office hours at the Public Health Department, Newbottle Street, Houghton.

The County Council pay for the examination of swabs taken by general practitioners in the district at King's College Laboratory, Newcastle-on-Tyne. During 1939 approximately 37 swabs were sent for examination of which 10 were positive, 25 negative and 2 inconclusive.

The incidence of diphtheria in the district was .65 compared with 1.14 for England and Wales.

The case incidence in the Wards was Houghton 0.00, Penshaw 0.86, Newbottle 0.40, Fence Houses 0.21, Herrington 2.64.

Immunisation.

Of the 19 cases of diphtheria 0 were immunised. Very few requests were received during the year for immunisation of children, but whenever this was asked for the children were duly treated.

Influenza and Pneumonia.

There was a slight epidemic of influenza at the beginning of the year, fortunately, on the whole, of a mild character. 11 deaths were ascribed to this during 1939 as against 8 in 1938 and 14 in 1937.

There were 19 deaths ascribed as being due to pneumonia (some influenzal pneumonia) as against 17 in 1938, but the number of cases of pneumonia notified were 80 as against 85 in 1938, and 55 in 1937.

Measles, Whooping Cough and Erysipelas.

1939 was noteworthy for the comparatively small number of cases of Measles and Whooping Cough. They became notifiable diseases in October, 1939, and during the remaining two months of the year only 4 cases of measles and 6 of whooping cough were notified. It is noteworthy (as was found throughout the country) that measles, which comes in big epidemic waves every second year, missed 1939 for its period of great prevalence.

During the year one death was ascribed to whooping cough and none to measles.

For reasons previously explained no action was taken in the district for the use of measles serum for prevention or attenuation of the disease.

There were 13 cases of erysipelas notified during 1939, as against 28 in 1938.

School Notification of Disease.

No fresh cases of any notifiable disease were notified from the schools.

Notifiable Diseases during the Year 1939.

The incidence of infectious diseases, other than tuberculosis, as notified in the district during the period under consideration, the number of cases which received treatment in hospital and the number of deaths from such infectious diseases is shown in the following table.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during 1939.

Disease				Total Cases Notified	Cases Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox	..	..	..	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	26	23	—
Diphtheria	..	..	..	19	18	—
Enteric Fever (includ. Paratyphoid)				—	—	—
Puerperal Fever	..	..	..	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	..	..	5	1	—
Erysipelas	..	..	..	13	1	—
Pneumonia	..	..	..	80	—	19
Ophthalmia neonatorum	..	..	..	3	—	—
Measles	..	..	..	4	—	—
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	6	—	—
TOTALS	..	..	..	156	43	19

The following table shows the following important facts, viz.:— the age incidence of the cases of each of the various diseases including all forms of tuberculosis, the sex and age incidence of cases of pulmonary and non-pulmonary tuberculosis, and the incidence of each disease in every Ward.

Cases of Infectious Diseases Notified during 1939, showing age incidence and distribution in District.

Notifiable Disease	Number of Cases Notified												Total No. of Cases Notified in Each Ward						No. per 1000 Population	
	At Ages—Years												Houghton	Penshaw	Newbottle	Fence Houses	Herrington	Total		Cases Removed to Hospital.
	Under 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 and over								
Scarlet Fever	4	1	12	5	2	2	...	...	...	6	8	...	7	5	26	23	0.89
Diphtheria	1	2	4	6	4	1	1	...	...	...	...	6	6	1	10	19	18	0.65
Puerperal Pyrexia	4	1	...	...	1	2	2	...	...	5	1	0.17
Pneumonia	...	4	6	6	2	6	5	2	10	6	14	10	29	15	12	19	5	80	...	2.74
Erysipelas	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	4	5	1	4	2	1	2	4	13	1	0.44
Pulmonary } Male	3	4	...	5	...	5	2	2	2	1	12	...	0.41
Tuberculosis } Female	1	...	...	3	1	5	...	...	...	5	3	...	1	1	10	...	0.34
Non-Pulmonary } Male	1	...	...	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	2	...	4	...	0.14
Tuberculosis } Female	4	2	1	1	...	...	...	2	2	1	2	1	8	...	0.27
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	...	3	...	0.10
Acute Encephalitis Lethargica
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis
Enteric Fever
Small Pox
Dysentery
Measles	...	1	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	1	...	4	...	0.14
Whooping Cough	2	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...	1	...	6	...	0.20
Totals	14	8	9	15	8	30	20	11	29	11	24	11	62	41	21	39	27	190	43	

Case Rates for Infectious Diseases — Notifications per 1,000 population.
 Figures for England and Wales, 148 Smaller Towns are Provisional Figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns. Those for Houghton Urban District are corrected.

Case Rates in Wards								
Disease	England and Wales	148 Smaller Towns Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census	Houghton Urban District					
				Houghton	Penshaw	Newbottle	Fence Houses	Herrington
Smallpox	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Scarlet Fever	1.89	1.78	0.89	0.67	1.14	0.00	1.49	1.32
Diphtheria ...	1.14	1.16	0.65	0.00	0.86	0.40	0.21	2.64
Enteric Fever	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Erysipelas	0.34	0.31	0.44	0.44	0.28	0.20	0.43	1.05
Pneumonia	1.02	0.89	2.74	3.22	2.15	2.39	4.04	1.32

Prevention of Blindness.

Schemes for the above are entirely under the jurisdiction of the County Council.

Tuberculosis.

There has been no action taken during 1939 under the Public Health Act (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925 (relating to persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis employed in the milk trade), or Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936 (relating to the compulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from tuberculosis).

New Cases and Mortality during 1939.

22 cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, being 12 males and 10 females were notified or came to notice during the year, also 12 cases of non-pulmonary tuberculosis, being 4 males and 8 females. In 1938 there were 13 cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, being 5 males and 8 females, and 16 cases of non-pulmonary forms, being 11 males and 5 females, notified.

The following table shows the distribution of pulmonary and non-pulmonary cases of tuberculosis notified in 1939 according to sex and ward.

Ward	Pulmonary Tuberculosis		Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis		Totals
	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Houghton ...	5	5	2	2	14
Penshaw ...	2	3	...	2	7
Newbottle ...	2	...	...	1	3
Fence Houses...	2	1	2	2	7
Herrington ...	1	1	...	1	3
Totals ...	12	10	4	8	34

The following table shows the various age-periods, for males and females, at which the new cases were notified and when death occurred.

Age Period		New Cases				Deaths			
		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 year	..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
1 year	..	—	1	1	—	—	1	—	—
5 years	..	—	3	1	6	—	—	—	—
15 years	..	4	2	1	2	—	1	2	—
25 years	..	3	4	1	—	2	1	2	—
35 years	..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45 years	..	3	—	—	—	2	—	—	1
55 years	..	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	1
65 and upwards	..	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
TOTALS	..	12	10	4	8	7	3	5	2

The figures in the Death columns are from locally compiled records.

Occupation.

In the case of pulmonary tuberculosis :

4 were housewives, 6 were miners, 3 were domestics, 1 was a collector-salesman, 1 was a messenger boy, 1 was a tailor, 1 had no occupation, 4 were at school, and 1 was under school age.

In the case of non-pulmonary tuberculosis :

1 was a housewife, 7 were at school, 1 was a labourer, 1 was a domestic, 1 was a shop assistant, and 1 was under school age.

Site of Lesions in Non-Pulmonary Cases.

2 cervical glands, 3 abdomen, 1 hip, 3 knee, 1 meninges, 1 mesenteric glands, and 1 kidney.

Social Conditions of Patients Suffering from Tuberculosis.

Nearly 60% of the patients suffering from tuberculosis share their rooms with one or more persons, the majority also sharing the bed. This is definitely undesirable in cases of pulmonary tuberculosis or where there are discharging wounds and this should always be borne in mind in allocating houses. Financially the family income is that of the average working man in the district, but in a long drawn out illness such as tuberculosis the extras necessary for the patient frequently negatives the ability to pay rent for a larger house.

This is probably one reason why names of families with a patient suffering from tuberculosis are rarely found on the application forms for council houses.

Notification of Tuberculosis.

This seems to have been greatly improved within the past few years. Practitioners realise it is a duty and the patient or friends have learnt that notification is actually to help them since the sooner the County authorities know, the sooner they can help in treatment. There were six deaths from tuberculosis during the year which had not been notified, which I believe were not notified because the doctor in attendance was waiting to make sure of the diagnosis first, but death intervened.

Examination of Sputa.

Sputa specimens are examined in the Public Health Laboratory, Newcastle, the County Council paying the charge therefor.

During the year 13 specimens were sent by local practitioners, of which 4 were positive and 9 negative. The Assistant Tuberculosis Medical Officers sent 50 specimens from patients resident in the area. Of these 8 were positive and 42 negative.

